

Editorial

Thanks to many people's unstinting work, the expansion of the journal in 2008 to eight issues went well. The page length increased to 1,212, and 49 main papers were published, 29 per cent of the number of submissions during 2007. The wait between acceptance and publication was long (7·3 months) at the beginning of 2008 but has shortened and is expected to reduce a little more. All eight issues of volume 28 carried useful book review sections. Mima Cattan, the Associate Editor, Joanna Bornat and Julia Johnson, the Review Editors, Miles Lambert, the Editor's Assistant, and Emma Pearce, the production editor in Cambridge are warmly thanked for managing the increased flow of papers and the more intense work with skill and enthusiasm. I also thank wholeheartedly the large virtual college of referees whose evaluations of the papers are vital for the journal. From mid-2007 to mid-2008, 191 references were received. With very few exceptions, they were not only penetrating analyses and critiques but also fashioned in a constructive spirit, with as many comments on the papers' potential as on their errors and weaknesses. Many authors receive from the referees a great deal of expert coaching in the preparation of academic papers. Given all the signs of the large and growing demand for space in the journal, Cambridge University Press has agreed a further expansion by 128 pages in 2009.

The quality of both the qualitative and quantitative papers is steadily rising, and each year the topics become more diverse. Notable recent or accepted papers include several on the circumstances of disadvantaged older people in low income countries or settings (Argentina, Korea, Nepal and Uganda), a critique of dementia care policy in India, a cautious longitudinal analysis of the prevalence of loneliness in China, and also from China, a fascinating analysis of relationships between city modernisation indicators and expressions of inter-generational support or filial piety. The last introduced a dimension to the debates on intra-generational support and solidarity that I have not seen from western gerontologists, the extent to which 'moral education' (perhaps more familiarly, socialisation) influences views about and the practice of filial piety and the material support of older parents. As gerontology breaks out of its rich-country origins and mindsets, we can expect many other fresh perspectives on familiar topics.

Recent issues of the journal have covered other topics that are generating new kinds of work and quite rapid advances in understanding. They

include: older people as volunteers and in civic and non-family roles; what constitutes psychosocial dementia care and how it can be delivered by both family and paid carers, including those with little prior training; and the bases of unequal pensions entitlements in not only gender and occupational status but also type of employer. Large United States, European country and pan-European data bases have also been astutely exploited by several authors to refine our understanding of, for example, the interactions in the ever-changing welfare state between informal and paid care and their complementary relationships.

Readers may have noticed that the annual indexes of topics and principal authors did not appear in the November 2008 issue. Now that a relatively long run (from 1997) of the journal's volumes has been digitised and can be searched on the *Ageing & Society* web pages, the printed index has lost much of its value. There are plans to add every volume to the digitised collection. The CUP Journals website search engine is strongly recommended as a bibliographic tool (at <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/search>): it allows four search terms, searches that include or exclude the book reviews, and specification of the years and fields, *e.g.* abstracts, authors, keywords and journal and paper titles.

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